PSF

Poland

July-Dec. 1939

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

file confidential

PSF
Poland
(1)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to Eu

July 11, 1939

6-7-39

also Finland & the Baltics

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch no. 1082 of June 7, 1939 which was marked for the President. The despatch contains observations of the Soviet Ambassador Sharanov in Warsaw on the current Anglo-Soviet discussions. → See next page for full subject

Sincerely yours,

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Warsaw,
no. 1082, June 7, 1939.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted 7/7/39

ADDRESSED TO

Brig. Gen. Watson,

The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

PSF Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1082 Warsaw, June 7, 1939

Subject: Observations of newly appointed Soviet Ambassador on certain aspects of (a) the Anglo-Russian negotiations; (b) position of Baltics and Finland; (c) Molotoff's speech; (d) Polish-Russian relations.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to supplement my despatch No. 1075 of June 3, 1939, and to report that in conversation with newly appointed Russian Ambassador Sharonov we discussed confidentially and frankly the substance of Molotoff's speech. The Ambassador stated he felt no anxiety about the eventual outcome of Anglo-Russian negotiations. He looked for a comparatively early settlement and felt that

a

See Amb-Biddles despatches of No 1075 — in re - Molotovs address of May 31-1939 — Memo to watson from Miles dated - June 21-39

Poland

a mutually satisfactory formula could be found to iron out present difficulties. As a matter of fact, a tri-cornered alliance was the only alternative for Russia under circumstances existing in Europe today. It was only natural that Russia was anxious over the position of the Baltics, as she was over the question of fortifying the Åland Islands, for Russia was fully aware of Germany's intention to use the latter as a base of naval operations and to use a potentially non-resistent Baltic area as a comparatively easy pathway to Russia's western frontier. Indeed, Poland was equally disturbed over the Baltic position, for a German march through the Baltic states would spell Poland's further encirclement and thus strike a severe blow at Poland's strategic position.

At that point I remarked that six months ago I predicted that by spring Rosenberg might be expected to come to the fore again in the event of Polish resistance to any potential one-sided demands by Germany. I believed that if Berlin were sufficiently impressed by Polish resistance, Berlin would be more inclined to turn to Rosenberg's <u>drang nach osten</u> formula via the Baltics. Memel's occupation and Danzig's envisaged annexation would appear to fit in as strategic bridgeheads in Rosenberg's plan. Moreover, their fortification and use as naval bases would threaten the east Baltic. Having made these remarks by way of drawing out the Ambassador, he thereupon concurred with the substance thereof, adding that Moscow had watched these developments with

concern.

concern. Indeed, from the standpoint of strategic consideration, Memel's and Danzig's fortification by Germany would engage Moscow's as well as Warsaw's concern.

He then remarked that Finland's position was also a source of worry to Moscow. Finland had been playing too closely to Germany to suit Moscow, and Moscow was well aware that in its anti-Russian attitude Helsingfors might be expected to side with Germany in the event of a conflict. At any rate, Moscow was aware that one of Berlin's tactical plans envisaged a military approach to northwestern Russia through Finland. Hence, Moscow had given this possibility serious thought.

The Ambassador then took occasion to emphasize that Molotoff had not only meant what he said, but had also voiced the reactions both of his Government and people when he stated in effect that Russia did not intend to serve as an instrument for pulling the chestnuts of other states out of the fire. Indeed, Russia had long been aware of Britain's policy to make others do her fighting for her, and Moscow intended that Britain should not accomplish this desire in the event of another European conflict.

Molotoff had also expressed the reactions of Russian public opinion to "Munich" when he berated the democratic countries for their policy of appeasement and their attempt to soothe public opinion and to belittle the significance of the tragic failure and detrimental effect upon civilization that the Munich Agreement had spelled.

He

He was gratified to find a marked improvement in the general attitude of Poland towards his country. The officials with whom he had already come in contact had accorded him only the most friendly and cordial reception. His preliminary conversations with Beck had proven most satisfactory, and he felt that his relations with Beck would be both frank and friendly. There was still, of course, a trace of restraint in the Polish attitude, but this perhaps was only natural for it had been only twenty years since Russia had almost succeeded in making Poland a Russian colony. The Ambassador could understand that Poland's geopolitical position between two colossi was difficult, and were he a Pole he too might balk at permitting the passage of the troops of either of these two great powers over Polish territory. He would do his utmost further to improve Polish-Russian relations, and he thought that he would be aided in this regard by Poland's growing apprehension over Germany's expansion desires.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

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AJDB/is
(In quintuplicate)

A TRUE COPY
AS THE SIGNED
ORIGINAL

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

file personal

PSF
Poland
(1)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to Eu

July 12, 1939

6-9-39
6-9-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing copies of the following strictly confidential despatches from Ambassador Biddle which have been marked for the President:

No. 1079, dated June 9, 1939 reporting reaction of Polish officials to Berlin's present attitude toward Poland;

No. 1083, dated June 9, 1939 concerning activities of German Ambassador at Warsaw.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosures:

Copies of two despatches, as listed.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted 6/29/39

ADDRESSED TO

Brig. Gen. Watson,
The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

TSF Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1079 Warsaw, June 9, 1939

Subject: Reactions of Polish Official circles to Berlin's current attitude.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that my recent conversations with informed officials here reveal that their reactions to Berlin's current attitude assume in effect the following line:

Notwithstanding (A) a noticeable *détente* in general tone of German press *vis-à-vis* Poland; (B) Berlin officialdom's suggestion that Warsaw and Berlin agree to soft-pedal

their

their respective press campaigns; and (C) Wilhelmstrasse's having recently "taken to sending word" to Warsaw, 1/ indirectly through League High Commissioner Burckhardt and others, and 2/ through German Ambassador to Poland von Moltke, that Berlin would welcome re-opening of Warsaw-Berlin negotiations when times were quieter; Berlin (a) continues to "hack away" at the Danzig problem both in press and through other forms of propaganda, as well as through inspiration of provocative activities in Danzig; and (b) appears to be deliberately heaping coals on smoldering fires by further irritating Warsaw with attempt to deport to Poland Jews of Polish origin living in Germany.*

From the foregoing disclosures, I gained the impression my informants feel that the discrepancy between Berlin's words and actions cautions against attaching too much credence to Berlin's "smiles". Moreover, they are frank to admit that the aforementioned discrepancy serves further to diminish confidence in any expression of intention or policy on part either of Hitler or his associates.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

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AJDB/is
(In quintuplicate)

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* In this connection, Jewish leaders here inform me that during past three days 80 Jews have been chased from Germany over the German-Polish border. Although most of them had no papers, the Polish authorities at Zbąszyn took pity and permitted them to enter Poland. According to my aforementioned informants, about 4,000 Jews of Polish origin living in Germany recently received orders to evacuate Germany. My informants understood that the Polish Government had warned Berlin that it would have recourse to retaliatory measures should mass expulsion of Jews of Polish origin take place in Germany. My informants added their estimate that there were about 20,000 Jews of Polish origin currently inhabiting Germany. Some of these had passports in order; others had no papers.

A TRUE COPY OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL

TRIPLICATE

No. 1083

Warsaw, June 9, 1939

Subject: Current propaganda campaign of German Ambassador and his staff amongst their colleagues, aimed at weakening anti-aggression front.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report the following observations upon current propaganda activities of the German Ambassador and his staff: They have for the past several weeks been actively engaged in propagandizing among the Chiefs and staffs of Missions representing a number of the links in the chain of anti-aggression forces.* The Ambassador's

program

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* The newly appointed Soviet Ambassador here confidentially volunteered the information that Moscow was aware that the German Mission Chiefs in all capitals throughout Europe were, pursuant Wilhelmstrasse's instructions, conducting a propaganda campaign among their colleagues with view to weakening, if not breaking up, the anti-aggression front.

program has thus far entailed a series of luncheons and dinners whereat he arranges that the particular colleague whom he wishes to impress joins him in after-luncheon or after-dinner conversation in a salon apart from the other guests. During the past two weeks he has thus conducted lengthy talks with the Rumanian Ambassador, the Yugoslav Minister, the Greek Minister, the Swiss Minister, the Swedish Minister, the Finnish Minister, and the Netherlands Minister.

I learn that Moltke usually adopts the following "line": Both the moral and armed strength of the Axis is far superior to that of the democracies. He thereupon cites statistics on comparative air strengths and motorized equipment, heavy artillery, et cetera. Moreover, he makes it a point to emphasize that, in case of war, the anti-aggression forces east of the Axis would have to look for aid from Russia, for neither Britain nor France could help them directly either in terms of troops or equipment. This would mean that the anti-aggression forces of the aforementioned category would be forced to run the risk of encountering eventual Russian pressure. Realizing the dependence of certain states upon her aid, Russia might thus be in position to impose conditions to the disadvantage of states concerned.

Moltke, moreover, points out that, should London and Paris come to terms with Berlin, the other anti-aggression

forces,

forces, having served London and Paris usefully as "scenery in a big show", would be left to shift for themselves. They should therefore be mindful of their potential subsequent position vis-à-vis a Berlin which had a limit to its patience (This is clearly a warning that, in event Britain, France, and Germany came to terms, the "little fellows" had better be careful lest they be left at the mercy of Germany's potential vindictiveness).

Regarding Poland, Moltke points out that now, given an opportunity to count Poland among the anti-aggression forces, Britain and France had thus far given little, if any, tangible evidence of their confidence and serious intention. Indeed, their combined attitude had been characterized by delay in extending Poland accommodation in terms of equipment and finance. This example could hardly prove encouraging for other links in the anti-aggression chain (This remark indicates Berlin is keeping close watch over London-Warsaw negotiations).

In further attempt to engage his listeners' concern over London and Paris, and particularly London, Moltke significantly intimates that reports reaching Berlin indicate that certain important elements in both capitals are only awaiting a psychological moment to invite the Axis powers to a peace conference. In this connection, Moltke

intimates

intimates in effect that, for purposes of home consumption, London might conceivably resort to a pretext that, in terms of peace gestures, it was necessary to leave no stone unturned, in order to place the blame for a possible conflict at Hitler's door. Judging, however, from current delays in implementing the present form of the Anglo-Polish Pact with moves of practical value, it would appear London was hesitating, and giving serious consideration to the risk of involvement in a war over such questions as Danzig and a Corridor passageway.

In cases where Moltke's listeners have subsequently imparted in confidence the substance of his remarks, I have been careful to study my informants' reactions. Accordingly, I discerned that, with but few exceptions, they were greatly impressed, and concerned - in some cases obviously dismayed.

As I have pointed out in previous writings, Moltke is intelligent and possesses a charming, convincing manner.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

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AJDB/is
(In quintuplicate)

A TRUE COPY OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

File personal PSF Poland

In reply refer to
Eu

July 19, 1939

6-7-39
6-28-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing copies of the following strictly confidential despatches from Ambassador Biddle which have been marked for the President:

No. 1080, dated June 7, 1939 concerning official Polish reports on Italo-German relations;

No. 1126, dated June 28, 1939 concerning the propaganda campaigns conducted by the German, Japanese, and Italian Embassies in Warsaw.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosures:

Copies of two
despatches, as
listed.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted: 7/18/39

ADDRESSED TO

Brigadier General Watson,
The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

PSF Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1080 Warsaw, June 7, 1939

Subject: Substance of Polish officialdom's recent confidentialy reports from Rome and Berlin.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that official circles here: (A) characterize Italy's condition and attitude as weakness and fear. Competent Italian circles in Berlin had been intimating to Polish diplomatic circles Rome had conditioned its signature to the Axis Alliance upon: 1/ no involvement in a conflict over Danzig, and 2/ the Alliance's preliminarily facing west. Informants state their opinion that meanwhile

Mussolini

Mussolini and Ciano (a) with view to favorably impressing Rome diplomatic circles, had been posing as restraining influence on Berlin as regards Polish-German differences, and (b) were pressing the Vatican directly and indirectly to embark on major peace effort; (B) indicate that Hitler, having studied military tactics under tutelage of high-ranking officer, now intended to lead Army as Commander-in-Chief, a prospect which caused Generals Keitel and von Brauchitsch considerable concern.* Moreover, Hitler now contemplated campaign envisaging freezing fronts against French and Polish and concentrating on Axis drive against Balkans, subsequently rendering Italy freedom of action in eastern Mediterranean as well as France. (C) Himmler, whose motto was "rule and dominate" either by war or internal disruption, was rapidly gaining domination over Goering as well as "Maffia" surrounding Hitler.**

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

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AJDB/is
(In quintuplicate)

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* Hitler told Beck he regretted not having made war against Czechoslovakia when he was still young enough to do so.

** Himmler once told Łubieński that Genghis Kahn was a man after his own ideals, for he based his warfare upon ultimatums and when the nation succumbed he killed only the men, but when the nation resisted he killed both the men and the women.

A TRUE COPY OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL

Subject: Form assumed by propaganda campaigns of Axis and Japanese Embassies here; observations thereon.

[redacted] FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 1083 of June 9, 1939. Complementary propaganda campaigns of German, Japanese and Italian Embassies here amongst Polish political as well as diplomatic circles have now assumed following form:

(a) German Embassy, predicting that a probable breakdown

breakdown in Anglo-Russian negotiations would result in Britain's coming to terms with Germany, warns Polish contacts and representatives of Baltics and States composing anti-aggression front against going too far out on limb of Britain's "encirclement" policy, in that an Anglo-German deal would leave them to face alone Germany's vindictiveness. Besides German Embassy propaganda continues to stress 1/ unlikelihood of British or French support of Poland in war over Danzig, and 2/ due to combination of Germany's campaign of "creeping conquest" vis-à-vis Danzig, and Poland's eventual economic exhaustion, Danzig would fall into Germany's hands.

(b) Japanese Embassy basing forecast of no war this year based on prediction of 1/ breakdown in Anglo-Russian negotiations, due to Moscow's and London's apprehension over consequent Japanese-Axis alliance; and 2/ consequent Anglo-German deal; emphasizes Tokio's disinclination to join Axis alliance, in view of Tokio's preference to remain free to deal directly and bilaterally with London rather than through Berlin as Axis ally.

(c) Italian Embassy's propaganda combines aforementioned "lines" with attempts to lull contacts in Polish and diplomatic circles into repose

by

by disclaiming Axis war intentions in relation to Italo-French differences or the German-Polish dispute over Danzig and a Pomorze passageway.

In connection with the foregoing, I discern in my conversations with my colleagues that upon certain thereof, representing States in the anti-aggression front, the above-cited propaganda is "cutting fairly deep". A number of them are impressed to a point bordering on confusion. In fact, if their attitude, as imparted confidentially to me, finds reflection in the policy of their respective Governments, then I should be inclined to look for reluctance on the part of the latter to cut all their bridges with Germany.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

AJDB/ah
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Copy to Embassy, Paris.
Copy to Embassy, London.

A TRUE COPY
OF THE SIGNED
ORIGINAL

PSF Poland

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

file personal

Poland

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 26, 1939

In reply refer to
Eu

6-27-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch no. 1121 of June 27, 1939 which was marked for the President. A memorandum of a recent conversation between Mr. Biddle and Polish officials regarding current developments is attached to this despatch.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Warsaw,
no. 1121, June 27, 1939,
with enclosure.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

ADDRESSED TO

Brigadier General Watson,
The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

Pst Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1121 Warsaw, June 27, 1939

Subject: Referring to despatch No. 1120, June 26; attaching memorandum on tour d'horizon by Polish governmental and military circles regarding chances of current situation's coming to a war.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 1120 of
1/ June 26, 1939 and to attach hereto a memorandum of my recent conversation with realistic governmental and military circles whereby I enjoyed the opportunity of "listening in" to a several hours' tour d'horizon. I was thus enabled to gain an impression of their trend of thought in relation to the chances of the current situation's coming to a war.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

Enclosure:
1. Memorandum

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AJDB/emq/1s
(In quintuplicate)

MEMORANDUM

June 27, 1939

In a recent informal but confidential conversation with a group of informed, high-ranking Government officials and military authorities, I enjoyed the opportunity of "listening in" to their "thinking out loud" in a several hours' tour d'horizon. I thus gained an insight to their trend of thought in relation to the chances of current European developments' coming to a war.

The following in effect represents the substance of my informants' discussion:

To their minds, it would be difficult to liquidate the current conflict of forces in Europe through statesmanship and diplomacy in that the differences at stake did not wholly constitute material problems. Indeed, underlying the conflict were two discernible, basically different conceptions. The Nazi regime of Germany were determined to impose their will upon states which they envisaged as a part of an eventual pan-Germanic area under Hitler's sovereignty. Moreover, Berlin wanted no outside interference, either with its methods of acquiring control over that area or with the form of control it might wish subsequently to exercise thereover. In this connection, the matter of recognized principles governing international relationships counted for naught in Berlin's view. Ethical

principles

principles had little to do with the conception of the power politicians of current-day Germany. Their mentality was attuned to the conception of ruthless, strong-armed methods to gain and subsequently maintain control over their objectives.

On the other hand, the forces in conflict with this conception based their international relations upon the principles of ethics and justice. It might even be said that they looked upon disputes arising out of international differences as a business man looked upon problems arising out of differences in the business field, and in this light upheld the method of conference and negotiation as a means of settlement of disputes.

Hitler might be expected to participate in a conference only if he were amply assured in advance that the "cards were stacked" in his favor.

Moreover, acceptance of the thought that the conflict between the totalitarian and democratic states found its roots in the fundamental difference between two divergent conceptions led one in turn to consider the question as to whether these two conceptions could live alongside of each other in the same world. Did it not, therefore, boil down to a question as to whether the democracies were willing and capable of tolerating the existence of the totalitarian regimes, and all they implied, and whether the democracies, in the interests of humanity, international law and order, and "good business", might

eventually

eventually decide to put an end to them.

In line with this thought, and in attempting to estimate in what direction Europe was heading, it seemed that one of the following three eventualities might be expected to prove the case: either appeasement (of the "Munich" type), or revolution in Germany (envisaging the downfall of the Nazi regime), or war, or prevention of war by no relaxstion in the anti-aggression front, and principally in a three-cornered nucleus thereof, London, Paris, and Warsaw.

So far as appeasement was concerned, the results of "Munich" had shown the flaws in such a course, and the disastrous results served as a warning against returning to such a means of settlement.

As regards a revolution in Germany, there were important elements, particularly in the "City" of London (some connected with no less an institution than the Bank of England), whose "wish-thinking" gave rise to political dreams devoid of realism, and envisaging the Nazi regime's downfall in consequence of mounting internal economic discomfort. Too much importance was apt to be attached to this possibility by these "stay-at-home" British elements. They were over-inclined, moreover, to think of Europe in terms of pre-War considerations, and were unfortunately given to "ostriching" their way through the "sunset years" of their lives. They failed to realize, however, that while Hitler's star went into a tailspin after the pogroms, and

again

again immediately after Germany's occupation of Czecho-Slovakia, nevertheless, his star later regained ascendency when the German masses awoke to a realization that their Fuehrer had "gotten away" with a major coup without spilling German blood. It gained added ascendent momentum, moreover, when Hitler, feeling around for some slogan to rally mass support again, seized upon "encirclement" as a "battlecry."

Meanwhile Hitler's having "gotten away" with his Czech coup strengthened his hand with the General Staff. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that during the interval between the end of the Great War and the Nazi regime, the Army played a minor role, and that Hitler's advent to power marked the commencement of an era characgerized by the re-establishment of the German Army as a formidable factor - indeed, in German eyes, the Army's re-glorification. The officers' corps were aware of this fact. In other words, it was useless to allow wish-thinking to overcome a necessarily realistic consideration of Hitler's current position. There were sufficient stores of food-stuffs to cover at least the requirements of the coming year; there was also the present harvest, which should cover about 90 per cent of Germany's next eleven months' requirements - besides, the masses were capable of further tightening their belts. Moreover, the internal political

forces

forces opposed to Hitler were not organized and lacked leadership. Hence, in terms of the next year at least, revolution in Germany was more likely after than before the commencement of a war.

If, therefore, one were to admit the impracticability of appeasement in the "Munich" sense, and that a pre-war revolution in Germany were unlikely, then one was confronted with the questions as to whether war might be the only solution and whether war might be prevented and by what means.

In this connection, my informants remarked that Hitler, whose political power depended on employment, bread and circuses, could hardly be expected to stop now - for to draw back at this point would spell industrial shutdowns resulting in unemployment, which would eventually prove a monkey wrench in the machinery propelling the momentum of Nazi policy. Indeed, employment formed one of the chief planks in Hitler's platform. The fact that employment in the Greater Reich was based mainly on the armament industry and construction of fortifications meant that Hitler would necessarily encounter serious social and economic problems were he to agree to participate in a program of disarmament. This was a picture wherefrom Hitler and, even to no less degree, the extremists constituting the "Mafia" (currently surrounding him) would be apt to recoil. Rather than face such a prospect, the

extremists

extremists might press Hitler to gamble "the works" for "big stakes" - this crowd still believed they could win in a campaign of lightning destruction. From the standpoint of logic, Hitler might be expected to recognize that the forces were mounting against him with the passing of each month, and in the same light one might expect that if Europe "got by" early November without war the chances of war during this generation would be almost nil. However, it was difficult to appraise the situation from the standpoint of logic when the situation rested solely upon the whims of a cyclothymic, Austrian mentality such as Hitler's. Meanwhile Hitler must go on providing his public with employment, bread and circuses.

At this point my informants emphasized their unanimous opinion that the only way to prevent war would be constant vigilance of a strong London-Paris-Warsaw front, which after all represented the nucleus of what had subsequently become known as the anti-aggression front. Accordingly, London and Paris must avoid giving Berlin the slightest impression of doubt as to their determination to support Poland in relation to Danzig. My informants then pointed out that Poland stood as the cornerstone of strength in Eastern Europe, and, if anything happened to Poland, Eastern and Central Europe would undoubtedly collapse. Up to this point, Hitler had been halted and might possibly be prevented from bursting out, provided the anti-

aggression

aggression front were maintained in vigor.

The strengthening and maintenance of the anti-aggression front might prove an expensive operation, but if it succeeded, as was its cardinal policy in preventing war, it would prove far cheaper than a conflagration. Besides, it should be borne in mind that since Hitler alone would decide the issue of war or peace, Hitler had an Austrian mentality, traditionally formidable vis-à-vis weakness but inclined to confusion and even retreat in the face of strength.

***
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AJDB/emq/is

file confidential

PSF Poland 1

Warsaw, July 28, 1939

My dear Mr. President:

During a recent discussion with a group of officials at the Foreign Office the conversation turned to the complicated structure of alliances, non-aggression agreements, et cetera throughout Europe.

The Counselor of the Foreign Office, Count Potulicki, thereupon showed me a chart which, for convenience, he had drawn up for Minister Beck and the latter's Cabinet Chief, Count Michał Łubienski. This chart presented a complicated structure in so simplified a form that I expressed the wish that I could obtain a similar one in the English language for you.

About a week later I received two copies, one of which the aforementioned official stated they

The President,

The White House.

they would be glad to have me send to you and the other one to the Secretary. Accordingly, I am forwarding you hereto attached the chart, together with explanatory key, which they made up for you and which I feel may serve you as, so to speak, "top-desk-drawer" convenient reference.

With every good wish, I am

Yours faithfully,

Tony Biddle, Jr

Enclosure:

Chart with key.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
Treaty Division.

Security System in Europe
(as of Aug. 15, 1935)

I. NON-AGGRESSION PACTS.

1. Poland-Germany. Declaration re non-application of violence - Berlin, Jan. 26, 1934.

2. Poland-USSR. Non-aggression Pact - Moscow, July 25, 1932.
Poland-USSR. Protocol of extension - Moscow, May 5, 1934.

3. USSR-Estonia. Treaty of non-aggression and peaceful settlement of disputes - Moscow, May 4, 1932.

USSR-Estonia. Protocol of extension - Moscow, April 4, 1934.

4. USSR-Finland. Treaty of non-aggression and peaceful settlement of disputes - Helsingfors, Jan. 21, 1932
USSR-Finland. Protocol of extension - Moscow, April 7, 1934.

5. USSR-France. Non-aggression Pact - Paris, Nov. 29, 1932.

6. USSR-Lithuania. Treaty of non-aggression - Moscow, Sept.28, 1926.
USSR-Lithuania. Protocol of extension - Moscow, April 4, 1934.

7. USSR-Latvia. Non-aggression Pact - Riga, Feb. 5, 1932.
USSR-Latvia. Protocol of extension - Moscow, April 4, 1934.

8. USSR-Turkey. Treaty - Paris, Dec. 17, 1925. "Traités de neutralité de non aggression et de procédure de conciliation, entre l'USSR et les Etats étrangers".

9. USSR-Italy. Pact of friendship, non-aggression and neutrality - Rome, Sept. 2, 1933.

10. Rumania-Greece. Pact of non-aggression and arbitration - Geneva, March 21, 1928.

11. Turkey-Greece. Pact - Angora, Sept. 14, 1933.

12. Turkey-Yugoslavia. Treaty of friendship, non-aggression, court procedure and conciliation - Belgrad, Sept. 27, 1933.

13. Turkey-Rumania. Treaty of friendship, non-aggression, arbitration and conciliation - Angora, Oct. 17, 1933.

II. Guaranty Treaties and Arbitration Conventions of Locarno.

1. Poland-France. Treaty of mutual guarantees - London, Dec.1, 1925.

2. Poland-Germany. Treaty of arbitration - London, Dec. 1, 1925.

3. Belgium-France-Italy-Great Britain-Germany. Treaty of mutual guarantees - London, Dec. 1, 1925.

4. France-Czechoslovakia. Treaty of mutual guarantees - London, Dec. 1, 1925.

5. Germany-France. Arbitration Convention - London, Dec. 1, 1925.

6. Germany-Belgium. Arbitration Convention - London, Dec. 1, 1925.

7. Germany-Czechoslovakia. Treaty of Arbitration. London, Dec. 1, 1925.

III. Treaties of guarantees other than those of Locarno.

Poland-Rumania. Treaty of guarantee - Geneva, Jan. 15, 1931, and Alliance Agreement of March 3, 1921, replaced by the Treaty of guarantee of March 26, 1926.

IV. Alliances.

1 (a) Poland-France - Alliance agreement - Paris, Feb. 19, 1921.

1 (b) Poland-Rumania (see III).

2. France-Czechoslovakia. Treaty of alliance and friendship - Paris, Jan. 25, 1924.

3. France-Yugoslavia. Treaty of friendly understanding - Paris, Nov. 11, 1927.

4. France-Rumania. Treaty of friendship (with protocol) Paris, June 10, 1926.

5. Czechoslovakia-Yugoslavia. Convention of Alliance of Aug.31, 1922, extended by the Pact of the Little Entente.

6. Czechoslovakia-Rumania. Convention of alliance and defense - Bucharest, April 23, 1921; extended by the Pact of the Little Entente.

7. Yugoslavia-Rumania. Convention of alliance and defense - Belgrad, June 7, 1921, extended by the Pact of the Little Entente.

8. Estonia-Latvia. Treaty of defensive alliance - Tallinn, Nov. 1, 1923.

Estonia-Latvia. Treaty for the establishment of alliance - Riga, Feb. 17, 1934.

V. Treaties of mutual assistance.

1. USSR-France. Treaty of mutual assistance - Paris, May 2, 1935.

2. USSR-Czechoslovakia. Treaty of mutual assistance - Prague, May 16, 1935.

VI. Various Agreements.

1. Germany-USSR. Treaty of Rapallo, April 16, 1922.

2. Germany-USSR. Treaty of neutrality - Berlin, April 24, 1926.
Germany-USSR. Protocol of extension - Moscow, June 14, 1931, "Traités de neutralité, de non-aggression et de procédure de conciliation entre l'U.S.S.R. et les Etats étrangers".

3. Poland-Estonia-Latvia-Rumania-Turkey-the USSR-Finland-Persia-Afghanistan. Convention re the definition of aggression - London, July 3, 1933.

4. Czechoslovakia-Rumania-Turkey-the USSR-Yugoslavia. Convention re the definition of aggression - London, July 4, 1933.

5. USSR-Lithuania. Convention re the definition of aggression - London, July 5, 1933.

Kellogg Pact.

6. Includes all the European States. Treaty - Paris, Aug. 27, 1928.

Little Entente.

7. Rumania-Czechoslovakia-Yugoslavia. Organization Pact - Geneva, Feb.16, 1933.

Balcan Pact.

8. Greece-Yugoslavia-Rumania-Turkey. Pact of the Balcan Understanding - Athens, Feb.9, 1934.

Baltic Pact.

9. Latvia-Lithuania-Estonia. Treaty of understanding and cooperation - Geneva, Sept. 12, 1934.

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PSF
Poland

File
Confidential

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
Eu

August 4, 1939

6-17-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch no. 1097 of June 17, 1939 reporting the reaction among Polish officials to recent conciliatory statements of British officials. The despatch was marked for the President.

Sincerely yours,

Acting Secretary

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Warsaw,
no. 1097, June 17, 1939.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted: 8/3/39

ADDRESSED TO

Brigadier General Watson,
The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

PSF Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1097 Warsaw, June 17, 1939.

Subject: Reactions of Minister Beck and close associates as well as reactions of other elements in Polish official circles to recent salvo of conciliatory utterances of British Government.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that in discreet efforts to feel the pulse of Polish official circles' reaction to Mr. Chamberlain's, Lord Halifax's and Sir John Simon's recent "salvo" of peace offers, I gained the impression that Beck continues to hold his impression (gained in London) of Mr. Chamberlain's and Lord Halifax's sincerity of

purpose

purpose to pursue a "halt" in place of London's former "heil" Hitler policy.

Beck and several of his closest associates were inclined to mark these conciliatory gestures down to a tactical move partly (a) for home and Dominions' consumption, and as such, a paliative to those elements which still clung to an appeasement policy; (b) to offset Hitler's play-up of encirclement; and (c) to tranquilize "business" which was suffering from war-jitters. In this connection, Beck and associates pointed out that Chamberlain had to think of the condition of Britain's vital trade interests and the effect of prolonged tension thereon - for after all, business was highly sensitive and was operating under an exceptional strain. London, moreover, had pointed out to Warsaw that continuation of excessively high war risk insurance rates in the Baltic and other waters had been working a hardship on British-Polish trade in particular and British Empire trade in general. I am aware, however, there is an element in official circles here which still harbors suspicions particularly in regard to Mr. Chamberlain.

This element inclines to feel that at heart Chamberlain still clings to an appeasement policy, that in his mind the anti-aggression forces represent merely "scenery in a make-shift show", put on to preserve his own prestige with British public opinion on the one hand, and to bring Berlin eventually to a conference table on the other hand.

Moreover,

Moreover, they are apprehensive lest as Fall approaches and Britain attains a more comfortable position in terms of rearmament, Chamberlain might be the more apt to feel he could afford to wobble, and even perhaps retreat from his present policy.

While the aforementioned element here admits that the main purpose of the anti-aggression policy is to bring Hitler to reason and thus prevent a war, still they feel that what they term Chamberlain's too apparent over-eagerness is apt to lead him to overplay his hand on this score, and thus prove costly for all links in the chain of anti-aggression forces.

Moreover, the aforementioned element abhors and recoils from the thought of anything which borders on appeasement in the "Munich" sense; they feel this would amount to little more than an invitation to Poland and France to attend a conference with "blank checks". Indeed, any gestures at this point along lines of Chamberlain's recent utterances only serve further to kindle this element's suspicion that he is fundamentally appeasement-minded and may be expected to lean in the direction of appeasement whenever the opportunity offers itself. In fact, they suspect that if Germany had not occupied Czechoslovakia and thus torpedoes (at least temporarily) Chamberlain's envisaged plans, Chamberlain might have been ready "to hurl colonies at Hitler's head" and to come to trade terms with Berlin along lines opened up by

representatives

representatives of Federation of British Industries during their visit to Germany.

In considering the foregoing views and in judging various aspects of London's recent peace gestures, I do not overlook the likelihood that Chamberlain's Halifax's and Simon's salvo of conciliatory utterances arose at least partly out of the constant tug of war reportedly going on in the British Foreign Office between the forces headed by the appeasement-inclined Sir Horace Wilson and the forces headed by Mr. Vansittart.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

710
AJDB/emq
(In quintuplicate)

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ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PSF
Poland
1

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
Eu

File
Personal

August 9, 1939

7-22-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch no. 1169 of July 22, 1939 concerning reports that a settlement of the Danzig dispute might be negotiated. The despatch was marked for the President.

Sincerely yours,

Acting Secretary

Enclosure:

From Embassy, Warsaw,
no. 1169, July 22, 1939.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,
Secretary to the President,
The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted 8-8-39

ADDRESSED TO

Brigadier General

Edwin M. Watson

PSF Poland

TRIPLICATE

No. 1169 Warsaw, July 22, 1939

Subject: Supplementing my despatches Nos. 1139, July 7, and 1157, July 15, 1939 and cables Nos. 146 and 147 of July 20 and 21 respectively; further observations on (a) rumors of negotiations over Danzig; and (b) on Polish reactions to Forster's proposals to Burckhardt; reports on London's reactions regarding possible negotiations.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that, as pointed out in my despatches Nos. 1139, July 7, and 1157, July 15, 1939, and my cables Nos. 146 and 147 of July 20 and 21 respectively, the air has been full of rumors from various quarters, some even appearing in articles in the press, to the effect either that Warsaw and Berlin were in the course of negotiations or

were

were about to reopen negotiations over the Danzig dispute. Moreover, I am aware of (a) continued efforts both by Rome and the Vatican to bring about a peaceful settlement thereof, and (b) Tokyo's continued efforts to find an opening whereby Tokyo might offer its good offices towards mediating Polish-German differences. It now seems, moreover, that Brussels is making soundings along the same lines.

It is only natural to expect that these behind-the-scenes efforts might prove fertile ground for rumors, and up to this point Warsaw has paid little heed thereto. In fact, as already pointed out, Warsaw has, through Mr. Smogorszewski, Berlin correspondent of the Gazeta Polska, sent up its own ballon d'essai (see my despatch No. 1157 of July 15) in the form of an article suggesting it was not inconceivable that the Danzig dispute might be negotiated.

Recently, however, the tempo of the rumors has increased. In fact, one which succeeded in "getting under the skin" of the Polish Government was a rumor to the effect that Hitler was soon to be elected President of the Free City. As a matter of fact, Beck emphasized to me yesterday that, quite apart from the manner wherein Berlin might strive to incorporate Danzig, the very fact of such an incorporation would represent an inadmissible violation of the present political and juridical status and would evoke the appropriate response.

I

I later found that at the press conference on the night of July 18 the Chief of the Foreign Press Bureau made some remarks more or less along these lines and that, as a result, one of the newspapers, Kurjer Warszawski, alluded in a vague way thereto. Since, however, no further publication has thus far been made on the subject in the internal press, I am inclined to believe that these remarks were intended exclusively for the foreign press.

On the other hand, as cabled by Consul Kuykendall on July 19 and by myself on July 20, Gauleiter Forster, pursuant Hitler's instructions, conveyed to League High Commissioner the latter's proposal that Warsaw agree to put Warsaw-Berlin differences in abeyance. Thus far (July 20) Berlin has failed to communicate this proposal to the Polish Government either directly or through Forster to the Polish Commissioner in Danzig. The Government has nevertheless become aware, through indirect channels, of the substance of the proposals (see my cables No. 146 of July 20 and 147 of July 21 regarding substance of these proposals and Warsaw's preliminary reaction thereto).

In addition to those remarks which I reported in my aforementioned cables, Beck imparted the following in connection with Forster's conversation with Burckhardt:

Berlin had frequently shifted its tactics since March; when one proved ineffective, Berlin produced another from its "bag of tricks". Accordingly, Berlin had started out

to

to discredit Poland in Western eyes as a potential fighting force; then to alienate Poland from Britain and France; when that in turn proved ineffective, Berlin had tried to discredit the western powers in Poland's eyes by predicting the former would not support Poland in a conflict over her differences with Germany. Failing to get anywhere with this propaganda, Berlin then tried to discredit Poland in western Europe by insinuating Poland was militant, aggressive, and was seeking to provoke a conflict. Having run through this round of tactics, Berlin was repeating each phase in turn. Now the Berlin propaganda factories were inspiring rumors aimed at making it appear as though Berlin wanted to negotiate and Warsaw turned a deaf ear. In view of the foregoing, Beck felt that Hitler's manner of approach, through a Gauleiter to the League High Commissioner in Danzig, instead of through available direct channels - formed grounds for suspicion and called for cautious consideration. Moreover, Beck recalled that during Burckhardt's last visit here, he had cautioned him lest in his earnest efforts to serve the cause of peace, Berlin might subtly use him as an instrument of German policy.

Of pertinent bearing, my interest is engaged by a recent report from a competent source that both Paris and London have recently informally cautioned Warsaw against rushing into talks with Berlin. In this connection, it seems that the British intelligence service learned that Hitler would prefer to stage his talks with Warsaw previous to "Nuremberg".

This

This preference was motivated by his desire to find a possible justification for the presentation of an ultimatum to Warsaw. In other words, if he could get the Poles into negotiations, say in early August, when the German manoeuvers would have gotten under way, Hitler could always stage a breakdown in negotiations which would undoubtedly lead to tension and possibly subsequent incidents, thus causing an acute crisis and potential grounds for the issuance of an ultimatum, which in turn might conceivably spell either a second "Munich" or military action. Accordingly, it would seem that while London and Paris want Warsaw to minimize any and all acts in Poland which might prove provocative and while they are desirous that Poland maintain a firm but polite attitude vis-à-vis Germany, they are now apprehensive lest, if Warsaw enter conversations with Berlin at this point, Warsaw might be walking into a trap. In view of these suspicions, therefore, London and Paris would prefer Warsaw to await the late fall before engaging in conversations looking to a settlement.

On the other hand, I received the report today, July 22, through competent channels, that Mr. Chamberlain, having been sounded by the Vatican and Mussolini's representative, replied he would not approve of any Polish-German discussions so long as the atmosphere of intimidation and pressure existed (If this report is true, then it would seem that Mr. Chamberlain

might

might possibly give more serious consideration to the Vatican's and Rome's efforts were the latter to show signs of effective progress and were the Danzig situation to become more tranquil).

In connection with the foregoing it is interesting, in reviewing the phases of London's attitude vis-à-vis Polish-German differences, to note that London's preliminary attitude was characterized by an attempt to patch up these differences at the earliest possible moment. With the passage of time, however, and a clearer understanding of circumstances on London's part, this preliminary phase gave way to the above described more realistic appraisal of the situation.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

710
AJDB/emq/is
(In quintuplicate)

OF THE ORIGINAL
A TRUE COPY

Excerpts from the Dept. of State copy published in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1939, Vol. I, General, pages 206-208.

File
Personal
Confidential

PSF
Poland -
3-16-39

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

August 10, 1939

My dear Mr. President:

In accordance with our conversation on the telephone of this morning, I enclose herewith for your information a memorandum of my conversation of yesterday with the Polish Ambassador.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Enclosure.

The President,

The White House.

PSF Poland

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

[redacted] DATE: August 9, 1939

SUBJECT: General European situation

PARTICIPANTS: Count Jerzy Potocki, Polish Ambassador; the Under Secretary

COPIES TO: S, A-B, PA/D, Eu

*** 1-1493

The Polish Ambassador called to see me this afternoon upon his return to the United States after a month's stay in Poland.

The Ambassador stated, first of all, that he was gratified to be able to tell me that the morale in Poland was admirable, and that he had not detected the slightest sign of hysteria nor of nervousness in any section of public opinion. He said that the attitude unanimously assumed by the Polish people was that if Germany forced a war upon them by threatening the autonomy and independence of Poland by the taking over of Danzig or by jeopardizing the integrity of the Corridor, the Poles

would fight to the last ditch to preserve their independence. He stated that this feeling was eminently strengthened by the intimate knowledge which the Poles had, through their familiarity with what was going on within Bohemia and Moravia, of the treatment being accorded to the Czechs by the German authorities. He said that it was notorious in Poland that the Czech male population had been classified by the Germans according to categories, and that many of these categories of Czechs had already been removed from the occupied provinces and had been taken to Germany, where they were being subjected to forced labor in the construction of fortifications, roads, et cetera.

The Ambassador stated that he had been equally impressed in the visits which he had made to England and France with the great change which had taken place within those two countries since last year. He said that in England particularly the morale was now magnificent and the rearmament program had reached a point of the greatest efficiency.

The Ambassador stated that the Germans were pursuing a policy along the Polish frontier of attempting to break down Polish nerves by continued concentrations of German divisions. He said on one day German divisions would be

concentrated at one point on the frontier and a couple of days later there would be a similar concentration on another point of the frontier, but he said that the significant thing about this was that they were practically always the same German divisions. The Ambassador said that his Government was aware that in Slovakia the Germans were exceedingly active in the way of military preparations. These preparations, he said, consisted primarily of the widening of existing roads, strengthening of bridges, and the construction of new feeder roads leading towards the Polish frontier. Within Poland itself, he said there was little evidence of military activity to the average observer. He said that most of the maneuvers were carried out at night, and that these operations were conducted with complete efficiency. He said that in the event of war the Polish General Staff had determined that they would not limit themselves to a defensive war, but would undertake an offensive campaign in order to penetrate into Germany, and that, with their highly mobilized forces, particularly the cavalry, the Polish General Staff believed that they had a reasonable prospect for success in such an endeavor.

With regard to the prospects during the next few weeks, the Ambassador said that Colonel Beck was inclined

to believe that war would not break out. He said it was Beck's impression that Hitler was becoming gradually convinced that the risks of a general war were too great for Germany to force the issue and that, while Ribbentrop was still continually telling Hitler that England and France would not fight over Danzig, the Polish Government knew that the German generals had informed Hitler two weeks ago that, while if the war could be limited to a war between Poland and Germany, Germany would win easily, if the war involved England and France the German generals could give no assurances of any kind to Hitler as to the outcome. He said that Hitler was beginning to get information from sources other than Ribbentrop which was leading him to feel that England and France would fight with Poland should Poland fight on the Danzig issue.

Beck believed that Germany would probably not risk war over Danzig but would continue for an indefinite period its present policy of constant provocation of Poland without going to the extreme limit. Beck believed it was far more likely that Hitler before the middle of September would bring about the downfall of the Hungarian Government, replacing it with a government completely subservient to Germany, and then spend the next six

months in amalgamating the position so obtained in order to make it easier for Germany to attack Poland when the time came through Hungary and Slovakia and in the same manner obtain a more preponderant position in southeastern Europe.

I asked the Ambassador what solution his Government saw to the present situation since it would clearly seem incredible that mobilization and military preparations could continue at the existing rate and that the entire world be kept at its present state of extreme uncertainty and of anxiety for any protracted period. To this the Ambassador made the singularly unconvincing reply that he thought that if no war broke out this autumn, the internal situation in Germany would become so serious by midwinter that Hitler would be overthrown by the spring and some more reasonable regime would come into power in Germany before next summer. I asked him if he had any reason to think that public opinion in Germany showed any signs of extreme dissatisfaction with the present regime, and he stated that he had no specific information to that effect but that he knew the internal economy of Germany was so precarious that the utmost measure of dissatisfaction was inevitable before many months had passed.

The Ambassador stated that on his return to the United States he had stopped off for a few hours in Berlin to talk with his colleague the Polish Ambassador, Lipski. He said that Lipski had told him that the refusal of the American Congress to revise the neutrality legislation had had an eminently encouraging effect upon the German authorities, both civil and military, but that fortunately this had been counteracted completely by the announcement made by the Government of the United States of its termination of the commercial treaty with Japan. Ambassador Lipski had said that no one could exaggerate the consternation which this step by the United States had created in Berlin.

I asked the Ambassador if he had any information, or what the opinion of his Government might be, with regard to the success of the negotiations now in progress in Moscow between the British and French and the Soviets for a political and military agreement. The Ambassador replied that Colonel Beck believed that a political agreement was improbable, but that he thought a military agreement would be concluded. In reply to a further inquiry from me, the Ambassador said that the Polish Government was informed that the Italian Government was continually counseling moderation on the German Government,

but that no representations of any kind had been made to Poland by Italy with regard to the Polish-German situation.

The Ambassador told me explicitly that there had been no conversations and no negotiations of any character whatever between Germany and Poland with regard to the Danzig issue. He said that the Polish Government had deliberately refrained from making any approach at all to Germany because of its conviction that if any such approach were made, Germany would construe it as a sign of fear and of weakness and would adopt a far more vigorous attitude.

The Ambassador stated in conclusion that Poland expected to get a cash loan from Great Britain and France in addition to the credits already arranged. He said that Poland's great need at this time was pursuit planes and raw materials, particularly cotton and copper. He said that a certain amount of the latter commodities could be obtained from Russia but that Russia was not in a position to supply very much, and that it was the most earnest hope of the Polish Government that some arrangements could be made in the United States for obtaining these raw materials. He said that his Government fully understood its situation in this

country on account of the Johnson Act, but it hoped, nevertheless, that some way could be found whereby credits might be obtained for the purchase of these supplies. I told the Ambassador that if he had any definite suggestions to make, I should be glad to consider them. He told me that he would talk with me again about this matter.

In general the Ambassador seemed to feel that war was not imminent and that, while undoubtedly a very serious crisis would arise before the end of August, it would probably pass off for the time being.

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

file personal

PSF
Poland
1

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
Eu

August 15, 1939

7-26-39
7-27-39
7-27-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing copies of the following strictly confidential despatches from Ambassador Biddle which have been marked for the President:

No. 1172, dated July 26, 1939 reporting various observations of Marshal Smigly-Rydz;

No. 1173, dated July 26, 1939 reporting the views of the Turkish Ambassador at Warsaw on the prospects of war;

No. 1176, dated July 27, 1939 concerning a memorandum on the international situation said to have been prepared by Sir John Simon and Sir Horace Wilson for Prime Minister Chamberlain's consideration;

No. 1177, dated July 27, 1939 concerning the Polish reaction to the Hudson-Wohltat conversations.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosures:

Copies of four despatches,
as listed.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted 8/14/39

ADDRESSED TO

The White House.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1033

PSF Poland

TRIPLICATE

No. 1172 Warsaw, July 26, 1939

Subject: Supplementing my cable No. 139 of July 6 and my despatches Nos. 1104, June 20 and 1115, June 24, 1939; substance of Marshal Smigły-Rydz's additional confidential observations on: (a) the pace and extent of Polish and German mobilization vis-à-vis one another; (b) time necessary for Germany to mobilize for conflict with Poland; (c) dates in connection with German maneuvers; (d) general aspects of military-political picture in making; (e) estimate as to chances of war - 60%; (f) clarification thereof (supplementing his former observations); (g) best means of war prevention.

[redacted]L

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to supplement my cable No. 139 of July 6, 1 p.m. and my despatches Nos. 1104 of June 20 and 1115 of June 24, 1939, and to report in the following paragraphs the substance of Marshal Smigły-Rydz's additional confidential observations:

Several

Several days ago Marshal Smigły-Rydz confidentially characterized the course of military activities on both sides of the Polish-German fence between March and the present as successive efforts on the part of each side to match the other in terms of mobilized strength; for example, when Poland had concentrated two divisions in vicinity of the Polish-German frontier, the Germans thereupon concentrated three on their side; immediately following this Poland increased her strength to five; shortly thereafter the Germans replied by equalling this amount on their side; thus each side had successively stepped up its strength gradually over a period of four months. However, the amount of German force now in the field vis-à-vis the Polish frontier could not as yet be regarded as an intensive mobilization. German troops were now gradually concentrating in the area vis-à-vis Poznań - but to date not to an alarming degree. Moreover, very recent reports indicated a slight increase in troop movements in the Breslau-Oppeln area - but not to an alarming extent thus far.

The Marshal then imparted that according to his own and his military experts' estimate it would take the Germans two weeks to mobilize forces sufficient to come to grips with Poland.*

The

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* According to information from other competent sources, however, the German air force is in constant readiness for action either to the west or east, a consideration which, to my mind, might have important bearing, for example, in event Berlin eventually might suddenly decide to present Warsaw with an ultimatum.

The Marshal then stated that his intelligence reports indicated that: (a) all leaves of absence granted on large scale to German officers corps during this month would terminate July 28 (as I pointed out in previous writing), and (b) that the student corps now engaged in harvesting would have returned to their respective home centers by August 10 and, as these students were reservists, they would be ready thereupon to engage in maneuvers.

Commenting then upon the more general aspects of the military-political picture in the making, the Marshal estimated that chances were 60% in favor of war and 40% in favor of the prevention of war this year. By way of clarification, supplementary to that which I reported in my memorandum attached to despatch No. 1121 of June 27, 1939, he pointed out that this represented Germany's strategic year; at the moment it was only reasonable to admit that despite declarations of firmness and public utterances regarding mounting strength of the anti-aggression front, the Axis still had the edge. Time, however, was working against Germany and a year hence would have found the military strength of the anti-aggression forces pretty well in balance with Axis strength; two years hence it would undoubtedly have surpassed Axis strength.

I am aware, moreover, that the Marshal is in accord with Beck's conviction that solidity on part of the anti-aggression front in a firm stand would prove the most effective antidote to Germany's expansion aspirations.

They

They both share the belief that this is the only language which might succeed in halting Hitler, who had thus far employed his armed force more as a blackmailing instrument than as a factor intended to come actually to grips with formidable strength.

However, they both feel that Hitler, alert for openings, would seize immediate advantage of any sign of weakness at any point along the anti-aggression front.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

710
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(In quintuplicate)

OF THE SIGNED
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PSF Poland

DUPLICATE

No. 1173 Warsaw, July 26, 1939

Subject: Observations of departing Turkish Ambassador on prospects of war; his disclosures concerning his farewell conversation with Marshal Smigły-Rydz.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to supplement my despatch No. 1172, July 26, 1939, and as of pertinent bearing to report that just previous to the departure of Turkish Ambassador Tek from this post (to take up his duties as Ambassador to Tokyo), I had a lengthy tour d'horizon with him.

He had just paid his farewell visit to Marshal Smigły-Rydz, upon which occasion they had exchanged views on the trend of developments in the European political arena. They had found themselves in accord

on

on most points discussed, with perhaps one slight exception: the Marshal had estimated the chances of a war this year at 60% while the Ambassador continued to place the percentage at 55%.

Moreover, while the Marshal pointed out that it would take the Germans a period of 2 weeks to mobilize sufficient forces to risk coming to grips with Poland, the Ambassador was aware that the German air force stood in constant readiness for action. Accordingly, should Hitler eventually decide to "have it out" with Poland, the readiness of the German air force might conceivably tempt Hitler to resort either to a threat of or an actual air bombardment, in a preliminary stage, during which time he could be mobilizing and moving his ground forces for a general attack. In event Hitler came to such a decision, he might possibly present Warsaw with an ultimatum containing a time limit of anywhere from 8 to 12 hours.

In this connection, the Ambassador imparted that his Military Attaché had recently disclosed that according to confidential military intelligence, Germany's plan of air attack vis-à-vis Poland envisaged the employment of about one thousand planes, attacking in flights of 100 at a time, twenty minutes apart. The plan, moreover, entailed the immediate destruction of centers of communication in the following order: airports, railway stations, bridges, telephone, telegraph and radio centers, etcetera. The German general staff thus aimed at crippling the Poles at the outset

through

through the destruction of all communications. (While the Turkish Ambassador refrained from divulging his Military Attaché's source of information, I am definitely inclined to believe it was the Air Attaché of the German Embassy here. I understand the latter, Goering's local mouthpiece, has recently adopted a "line" best characterized by psychological terrorism. Indeed, I am aware that he has lately been opening his mouth very wide in an effort to instill fear in Polish circles, as well as amongst his colleagues.)

The Ambassador then stated he was in accord with the Marshal's and Beck's opinion that solidity and firmness among the anti-aggression forces represented the best measures towards preventing Hitler's risking a war of long duration. The Ambassador felt, moreover, that should the anti-aggression forces succeed in checking Hitler, Hitler might seek to fall back upon negotiations with the potential appeasers whom he undoubtedly felt would always be glad to accomodate him at least to a certain extent. Should these appeasers fail to respond, however, to his beck and call, Hitler might conceivably dig himself in behind a gigantic defensive belt and drop back on doling out reserve stocks if pinched for foodstuffs - thus to tide him over the winter.

The Ambassador then observed that it was not inconceivable, moreover, that when the anti-aggression forces, pivoting on Great Britain, might have gained the edge over the Axis, they might present Germany with an ultimatum demanding, among other factors,

Germany's

Germany's immediate disarmament and participation in negotiations looking to a general European settlement, entailing possibly the restoration of Austria, to include perhaps Bavaria and Wurtenburg, as well as the restoration of Czechoslovakia, and the return of Germany to the family of liberal trading nations. Hitler, however, was aware of this possibility, and would undoubtedly take this possibility into consideration when determining his near term course.

In conclusion, the Ambassador concurred with my observation that, from Berlin's standpoint Danzig appeared to be comparatively a side-play in the major game between Berlin and London - that accordingly Berlin was tactically building up Danzig as a focal pressuring point with view to forcing (a) London into appeasement in a "big way",* and (b) to bringing Warsaw to terms. It was my further opinion that it was Berlin's desire at least to neutralize Poland, in case the latter's resistance proved too hard a nut to crack, without seriously "bleeding" the German army.

The

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* In my opinion, Danzig, from the German standpoint, serves Berlin in its game vis-à-vis London, like a button connected with a high voltage line leading into London. When Berlin wants to stir up jitters in London, it presses the button in hopes that the high voltage charge might succeed in shaking loose London's grasp on the object of Berlin's larger aspirations: colonial concessions, Germany's priority in the Balkans (possibly in general a free hand both in Eastern and Central Europe) some new financial accomodation and, among other factors, a settlement of Italy's claims against France. Meanwhile, Berlin would be feeling the pulse more in London than in Warsaw and should Hitler contemplate negotiations instead of resort to war, he might attempt to limit them to bilateral lines, with view to excluding Warsaw, Bucharest, and other anti-aggression capitals therefrom.

The Ambassador concurred adding that while Berlin was seeing to it that Warsaw received from various diplomatic posts abroad reports hinting at Berlin's willingness to negotiate the Danzig dispute, nevertheless, thus far there had been no direct efforts on Berlin's part to initiate negotiations on this score. Indeed, he was convinced Moltke had his orders to refrain from discussing any and all aspects of the Danzig problem directly with the Polish Government. The Ambassador, in other words, believed Berlin was stalling for time until completion of military preparations in Danzig, aimed at making the Free City a citadel, capable of defending itself against anything short of a major attack. Meanwhile, Berlin's game is aimed (a) at lulling Warsaw into a belief that Berlin is becoming more trading- than fighting-minded over Danzig; and (b) at creating an impression amongst the Western capitals that Warsaw is stubborn and unwilling to negotiate.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

710

AJDB/emq

(In quintuplicate)

A TRUE COPY
of the
signed original

DUPLICATE
PSF Poland

No. 1176 Warsaw, July 27, 1939.

Subject: Memorandum by co-authors Sir John Simon and Sir Horace Wilson, submitted for Chamberlain's consideration; Lord Halifax's policy contrasted with that of the Simon-Wilson group; bearing of memorandum upon substance of Hudson-Wohltat conversations.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that official circles' interest here is discernibly engaged by substance of following still unconfirmed report which, though not communicated officially by London, reached here through

sources

sources which informants deem sufficiently reliable to warrant consideration:

Sir John Simon and Sir Horace Wilson had collaborated in outlining a memorandum for Chamberlain's consideration to the following effect: It was recommended (a) to hasten signature of Anglo-Russian Pact in order to close up the peace front at the earliest possible moment, (b) thereafter, to send some one secretly either to Hitler or Goering to emphasize in effect that in "counting noses" the potential strength of the anti-aggression forces outweighed that of the Axis. Therefore, since London might be prepared to talk with Berlin, London would like to ascertain Hitler's maximum and minimum requirements. Among other factors, London would insist upon peaceful solution of Danzig dispute and graduated scale of disarmament, probably commencing with air and submarine arms. The memorandum moreover points out that while evidence through all available intelligence sources indicated Russia could not be counted upon to help any state unless Russia discerned internal unrest therein which Russia might employ as instrument of spreading revolution, nevertheless, Britain should hasten conclusion of a pact with Russia along current lines in order to impress Hitler with the anti-aggression front's preponderance. The memorandum concluded by emphasizing the importance of preventing war and commenting that since Hitler served as a barrier to Bolshevism, care should be taken to avoid any

steps

steps which might lead to an overthrow of Hitler. (I share informant's (a) surprise over revival in so important a document of the slogan that Hitler was a barrier against Bolshevism in Germany, (b) inclination to mark it down as traces of Nazi influence on co-authors, and (c) disinclination to believe Hitler's presence in power is any guarantee against Bolshevism).

If the foregoing substance of my informants' report is true, then I feel that it is indicative of the background against which Prime Minister Chamberlain is now working.

Of pertinent bearing, my informants are inclined to feel that while the Simon-Wilson group are constantly occupied in presenting recommendations, somewhat along the above lines, Lord Halifax, to a certain extent at least, attempts to hold in check the machinations of this group. Realistically judging Halifax's trend of mind, I am personally inclined to feel that while basically he is probably attune with what appears to be messrs. Chamberlain's, Simon's and Wilson's preference to conciliate rather than stand up to the aggressors, Lord Halifax differs with them only in terms of tactical approach. In other words, Halifax appears more inclined than the latter to avoid as long as possible any step which might possibly be interpreted by Berlin as a sign of weakness. Accordingly, while Halifax perhaps shares his aforementioned confrères' visualization of an eventual agreement with Berlin, he appears from this angle

to

to favor a play for time and a show of teeth during that time as the best means of minimizing the price.

In that, according to my informant's reports, Sir Horace Wilson was co-author of the aforementioned report and in that, according to Mr. Chamberlain's admission before Parliament that Sir Horace had seen Herr Wohltat on his recent visit to London, I do not exclude the possibility that the aforementioned report (if true) has a bearing upon the substance of Mr. Hudson's recent conversations with Herr Wohltat.

Respectfully yours,

A.J.Drexel Biddle,Jr.

710
AJDB/emq

(In quintuplicate)

OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL A TRUE COPY

PSF Poland A

DUPLICATE

No. 1177 Warsaw, July 27, 1939

Subject: Supplementing my despatch No. 1176, July 27, and my cable No. 149, July 26, 1939, 6 p.m.; additional observations upon Polish reaction to Hudson-Wohltat conversations; Mr. Hudson's discussions with New York financial circles concerning possibility of financing German disarmament.

[redacted]

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to supplement my despatch No. 1176, July 27, and my cable No. 149, July 26, 6 p.m., and to report the following additional observations upon reaction here to the widely publicized Hudson-Wohltat conversations.

As pointed out in my aforementioned cable, official circles here were disinclined to attach undue importance to these conversations. I am aware, however, that the implications of these talks did not "sit well" with Polish official and military circles in general.

One

One of my more realistic informants was frank to admit that if Britain engaged in conversations with Germany looking to an agreement, "Danzig" might be expected to dwindle in importance. At the same time, however, reflecting the expressed opinion of the majority of his confrères with whom I have talked, this same informant remarked that while he considered Britain would make good its signature to its pledges, peace remained Britain's cardinal objective. Accordingly, Chamberlain might be expected to exhaust all possible means of persuading Hitler he could not get away with aggression. At the same time, however, the British Government would continue its preparedness in case attempts failed to settle outstanding European differences peacefully.

As concerns my own preliminary reactions to the substance of Hudson's talk with Wohltat, I am inclined to regard it as a portent evidence to support the possibility that in the back of the British Government's mind is the thought of buying off Hitler as an alternative measure. In this connection, reports from usually reliable sources indicate that during Mr. Hudson's visit to the New York World's Fair he discussed various possibilities of war avoidance with New York financial circles - and that among other solutions broached, Hudson mentioned the possibility of financing German disarmament on a graduated scale in order to enable Germany to readjust itself by degrees to normal business conditions.

Apparently

Apparently, according to my reports, Hudson felt encouraged by the expressed reactions of the aforementioned banking circles. Hence, if this reported encouragement was responsible for Mr. Hudson's and his confrères'in the British Government, toying with the idea of buying Hitler off to the "tune" of $5,000,000,000, then it would appear that in the back of their minds the British Government are counting upon the United States, possibly under the heading of "America's contribution to world peace", to aid substantially towards affording Germany the aforementioned financial accomodation.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

710

AJDB/emq

(In quintuplicate)

OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL A TRUE COPY

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION FE

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

The President

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, U. S. A.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, $300

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,
Secretary to the President,
The White House.

THE WHITE HOUSE

PSF
Poland 1

August 25, 1939.

Copy of-Memorandum of President's telephone conversation with Ambassador Bullitt

Thanks you profoundly and accepts direct negotiation or conciliation by any power which is an honorable neutral. He passes over in silence the question of arbitration. He expresses the hope that the note will produce the results desired. Poland is demanding nothing of germany anywhere. They might be thinking of negotiations.

This is the gist of the message sent by the President of Poland to the President of the United States in answer to his proposal sent the day before.

See-Bullitt folder-Foreign File-Drawer 1-1939 for original copy

Poland
1

NC
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

WARSAW

Dated August 25, 1939

Rec'd 11:45 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

201, August 25, 8 a.m.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY.

One. Supplementing my number 191, August 24, 3 p.m. paragraph one. Further conversation with Beck and associates discloses that while it is difficult for them to stomach Danzig Senate's decree nevertheless after careful consideration all aspects Government thereupon decided to exercise further restraint.

Two. Accordingly Government adopted an official attitude along following lines: while substance of decree represented open violation of Danzig statutes its bearing was mainly internal and in such light a matter of consideration and actio of Committee of Three and League of Nations. For Poland, Danzig's internal structure was of secondary importance. Poland was mainly interested in full respect of Polish rights in Free City, accordingly Poland would interpret any one of following actions as violation of these rights: (a) attempt to annex Danzig to Reich; (b) exclusion of Danzig from Polish customs zone; (c) subjection of Polish rights in Danzig to control of third state; (d) withdrawal of Polish rights covering national development of Poles in Danzig.

Moreover

Moreover Polish Government would carefully observe development of conditions in Danzig inasmuch as Danzig had failed to manifest good will in the matter of customs inspectors.

Three. In connection with foregoing Beck confidentially imparted his Government would declare its attitude toward Danzig governmental alteration when the real aims of the revision become clear.

Four. Meanwhile 24 railway men arrested in Danzig yesterday were released and Polish courier detained early yesterday in Breslau was released and diplomatic pouch restored to him.

Five. Schoolship SCHLESWIG HOLSTEIN came to anchor as per schedule 7:40 this morning Danzig harbor. Early morning atmosphere in Danzig increasingly electric as evidenced among other factors by (a) overnight augmentation of military cars and trucks (b) yesterday's evacuation of many school children and (c) today's closing of schools.

Six. Either Hitler has decided to act and not talk or else the absence of some statement after his last night's conference with Nazi bigwigs (for which all press wires had been kept open until dawn) indicates Hitler is still undecided as to definite plan of action.

BIDDLE

CSB

file private

Poland

PAP
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B)

WARSAW

Dated August 25, 1939

Rec'd 4:25 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

209, August 25, 7 p.m.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

One. Beck imparted he had never seen an infuriated Jap until his yesterdays conversation with Professor Sakoh when latter raged against Germany for having double-crossed Japan through signing up with Russia without at least advance notice to Japan in accordance with secret clause contained in Anti-Comintern Pact.

Two. Jouvenal of PARISSOIR imparted that in his conversation with Ribbentrop at Koenigsberg (en route to Moscow) Ribbentrop had given him impression he visualized non-aggression agreement with Moscow as an alliance. This gave rise to suspicion amongst competent observers in diplomatic and press circles here that Hitler's plans now envisage tempting Russia to become dominating Asiatic power thus giving Germany free hand to gain domination of Europe. Beck and associates however, are still skeptical as to extent to which Berlin might rely upon Moscow.

Three. Beck moreover imparted Soviet Ambassador Charanov yesterday resorted to minor frontier incident as

pretext

pretext to point out that Moscow's non-aggression agreement with Berlin would not alter Moscow's relations with Warsaw. (This contradicts today's story emanating from Associated Press office in Berlin to effect Charanov proposed in Molotov's behalf a formula for the solution of Polish-German differences and Molotov's recommendation that Warsaw accept formula.)

Four. Beck labels as Nazi inspired propaganda Berlin Associated Press office's aforementioned as well as following reports: (a) of yesterday, that Hitler was yesterday sending ultimatum giving Warsaw choice between Beck's presence in Berchtesgaden and war and (b) of today, that Nazi circles discerned weakening on the part of London and Warsaw and were openly intimating that if those capitals were going to make concessions they had better do so before it was too late.

Five. I am inclined to feel that in trying to use all available foreign agencies as instruments of their propaganda in an intensified effort to whip up crisis atmosphere Nazi Government's disappointment over failure of effectiveness of report (a) above resulted in their subsequent inspiration of report (b) above. Moreover, resort to inspiration of rumors of this character indicates to my mind a state of indecision in Hitler's mind.

BIDDLE

WWC:DDM

FAST

RCA

DIRECT

RADIOGRAM

R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

RECEIVED AT 1112 CONNECTICUT AVE., WASHINGTON, D. C., AT [illegible] STANDARD TIME

1939 AUG 25 PM 7 52

WND80 PNS529 WARSAW 260 26, 0040 ETAT POLGOVT

URGENT HIS EXCELLENCY FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WASHINGTON

file highly confidential

PSF Poland

Poland

I HIGHLY APPRECIATE THE MOST IMPORTANT AND NOBLE MESSAGE WHICH YOUR EXCELLENCY WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO ADDRESS TO ME PARAGRAPH I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIS THAT THE POLISH GOVERNMENT ALWAYS CONSIDERED DIRECT NEGOCIATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AS

Telephone: National 2600

Form 112WN—TD 83

To secure prompt action on inquiries, this original RADIOGRAM should be presented at the office of R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, Inc. In telephone inquiries quote the number preceding the place of origin.

ST

RCA

DIRECT

RADIOGRAM

R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

RECEIVED AT 1112 CONNECTICUT AVE., WASHINGTON, D. C., AT_____STANDARD TIME

WND80 X 2/50

THE MOST APPROPRIATE METHOD OF SOLVING DIFFICULTIES WHICH MAY ARISE BETWEEN STATES STOP WE CONSIDER THIS METHOD ALL THE MORE FITTING WHEN ADOPTED BETWEEN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES STOP IT WAS WITH THIS PRINCIPLE IN VIEW THAT POLAND CONCLUDED PACTS OF NON AGGRESSION WITH GERMANY AND THE UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS PARAGRAPH

Telephone: National 2600

Form 1112WN—TD 22

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RADIOGRAM

R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

DIRECT

RECEIVED AT 1112 CONNECTICUT AVE., WASHINGTON, D. C., AT_____STANDARD TIME

WND80 X ROOSEVELT PAGE 3/50

WE CONSIDER LIKEWISE THE METHOD OF CONCILIATION THROUGH A THIRD PARTY AS DISINTERESTED AND IMPARTIAL AS YOUR EXCELLENCY TO BE A JUST AND EQUITABLE METHOD IN THE SOLUTION OF CONTROVERSIES ARISING BETWEEN NATIONS PARAGRAPH WHILE NATURALLY WISHING TO AVOID EVEN THE SEMBLANCE OF AVAILING MYSELF OF THIS OCCASION TO RAISE

RADIOGRAM

R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

DIRECT

RECEIVED AT 1112 CONNECTICUT AVE., WASHINGTON, D. C., AT _____ STANDARD TIME

WN80 X 4/50

THE POINTS AT ISSUE I NEVERTHELESS CONSIDER IT MY DUTY TO POINT OUT THAT IN THIS CRISIS IT IS NOT POLAND WHO IS PROFERRING ANY CLAIMS OR DEMANDING CONCESSIONS FROM ANY OTHER NATION PARAGRAPH IT IS THEREFORE ONLY NATURAL THAT POLAND AGREES TO REFRAIN FROM ANY POSITIVE ACT OF HOSTILITY

RCA

DIRECT

RADIOGRAM

R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

RECEIVED AT 1112 CONNECTICUT AVE., WASHINGTON, D. C., AT _____ STANDARD TIME

WN80 X 5/60

PROVIDED THE OTHER PARTY ALSO AGREES TO REFRAIN FROM ANY SUCH ACT DIRECT OR INDIRECT PARAGRAPH IN CONCLUSION MAY I EXPRESS MY ARDENT WISH THAT YOUR EXCELLENCY'S APPEAL FOR PEACE MAY CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS GENERAL APPEASEMENT WHICH THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD SO SORELY NEED TO RETURN ONCE MORE TO THE BLESSED PATH OF PROGRESS AND CIVILISATION

IGNACY MOSCICKI

Telephone: National 2600

Form 112WN—TD 83

To secure prompt action on inquiries, this original RADIOGRAM should be presented at the office of R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, Inc. In telephone inquiries quote the number preceding the place of origin.

AC
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

Warsaw

Dated August 30, 1939

Rec'd 2:28 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

RUSH

232, August 30, 1 p.m.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

One. Feverish efforts of British Embassy between 5 and 11 p.m. yesterday succeeded in persuading Polish Government to postpone general mobilization orders which afternoon's Council of Ministers had decided to issue at 11 p.m. British based plea on desirability of avoiding any move which might prove provocative to Hitler at least until Hitler's response might have been examined.

Two. I have anticipated the Polish Government's lack of confidence in Hitler to discontinue completion of all preparations for general mobilization (see my telegram 228 August 30, 10 a.m. paragraph one) and to guard against possibility of sudden German attack on Poland during course of current negotiations. It has just come to my attention that a general mobilization order is being posted consistent with availing (available?) equipment. The result of this is more for administrative purposes than to materially increase the armed forces. However

it

it is regarded as Poland's reply to the appearance of German troops in Slovakia and the terms of the German reply to the last British note.

BIDDLE

HPD

/

Full personal

PSF
Poland

C
O
P
Y

AMBASADA
RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ

September 1, 1939

49-G/SZ

Sir,

Upon instructions of my Government I have the honor to request your good offices in transmitting to the President the following reply of the Polish Government to his message of this morning.

The text of the reply is as follows:

"The Polish Government acknowledge with thanks President Roosevelt's telegram regarding bombing from the air of civilians in unfortified centers of population during war. They entirely agree with the principles expressed and with the feelings which inspire them. It is with these principles in mind that the supreme military authorities in Poland issued formal orders to refrain in the event of war from the bombardment of open towns and from such similar action as would be of direct danger to the civilian population. Unfortunately Poland whose territory has been since this

The Honorable
Cordell Hull,
Secretary of State.

early morning the object of unprovoked aggression by German forces has already been the victim of several attacks by air. The reported losses in civilian population render it doubtful as to whether the opposing side is respecting the rules to which the President refers. These rules which are the outcome of natural human feelings remain in force on condition and on the understanding that they will be also scrupulously observed by the opposing party".

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

JERZY POTOCKI

PSF
Poland
1

Transatlantic telephone conversation between Secretary Hull and American Embassy in Warsaw 5:00 p.m. Sept 1-1939

Hull and Winship

See--Hull folder-Drawer 1-1939

Box 15
Poland

The President received
word at 2.50 a.m. by telephone from
Ambassador Biddle through
Ambassador Bullitt that
Germany has invaded
Poland and that Lower
cities are being bombed
The Pres. directed that
all Navy ships and army
~~[illegible]~~ commands be
notified by radio at
once

A

In bed
3.05 a.m.
Sept 1
FDR 39

108

PSF
Poland
1

Sept 2, 1939

Conf message for Hull
From Bullitt

In re-information he received from Polish Ambassador through Beck who said that entire German bombing force was turned loose on Warsaw and destruction was terrible.

See--Bullitt folder-Drawer 1-1939

File Private

BF Poland

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: September 5, 1939

SUBJECT: Neutrality Proclamation

PARTICIPANTS: Count Jerzy Potocki, Ambassador of Poland
Mr. Witold Wankowicz, Counselor of Polish Embassy
Mr. Pierrepont Moffat, Chief, Division of European Affairs

COPIES TO:

*** 1—1403

The Polish Ambassador came with Mr. Wankowicz after having seen Mr. Messersmith.

The point they wished to make was the following:

They had reason to believe that in the draft neutrality proclamation as presented to the President Poland was listed as a belligerent. They urged that Poland should not be included on the theory that there was no declared war between Germany and Poland (even though there was declared war between Germany on one side and France and England on the other), and hence that the analogy of the Chinese-Japanese conflict, where the embargo was not applied, should govern.

They

They asked that I send a message over to Mr. Berle at the White House. This I declined to do until I had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Hackworth.

We all went down to Mr. Hackworth's office, who held that, legally speaking, you could not differentiate between parts of a war in which Poland, France and England were fighting as allies (the agreement between England and Poland, which Poland invoked, prevents there even being concluded a separate armistice or peace).

Quite apart from the legal aspect, I raised the question of the political effect should the President appear not to be carrying out the law fairly impartially and as intended by The Congress. I thought that any ultra legalistic interpretation might create the nucleus of an opposition which would make it harder to effect the repeal of the embargo as soon as Congress meets. The Ambassador asked if I were certain that such was the intention of the Administration. I told him that I thought the President's radio speech on Sunday, as well as the attitude of the Secretary of State throughout these past months, made it clear.

The Ambassador and Mr. Wankowicz expressed themselves as on the whole satisfied, and left the Department at 12:50.

PM

Pierrepont Moffat

Eu:PM:CMS

PSF
Poland
1

Sept 17, 1939

In re-Secret code Radiogram received at War Dept and sent to Cordell Hull by Johnson for the President.

In re-unjustified bombing of three villages in Poland

See: Cordell Hull folder-Drawer 1-1939

PSF
Poland
1

Memo for the President

From Adolph Berle--State Dept

September 18, 1939

In re-the Copy of "The Week"
Also takes liberty of sending a rough map of what he believes is probable design for Poland.

See:Adolph Berle folder-Drawer 1-1939

PSF
Poland

October 19, 1939.

Memorandum for the Sec of State from the President

Asks if it would not be a fine thing to do if we were to tell the Roumanian Government that the United States would be glad to receive former Pres. Moscicki if he cares to visit this country.

See:Hull folder-Drawer 1-1939

Pres sends another memo oct 28, 1939 to Hull on the proposed telegram to Bucharest about Moscicki. (Pres must be keeping telegram)
(Watch for it)

Poland
1

October 19, 1939.

Memorandum for the Sec of State from the President

Asks if it would not be a fine thing to do if we were to tell the Roumanian Government that the United States would be glad to receive former Pres. Moscisski if he cares to visit this country.

See:Hull folder-Drawer 1-1939

file personal PSC Poland

Paris, October 23, 1939.

My dear Mr. President:

I am deeply touched by your thoughtful letter of September 27. I assure you, moreover, that for the members of my staff and myself, to have conducted ourselves in such a manner as to have merited this commendation from you, is well worth the hardships we encountered.

I am deeply sensible of the honor of serving as Chief of Mission in Poland, under your inspiring leadership, and I am genuinely proud of the confidence you placed in me by appointing me to that post. I have indeed, constantly endeavored to do everything within my power to justify your confidence, which I so highly prise. It is therefore, with the greatest sincerity that I assure you your warm words of approbation prove a source of real gratification, pride, and encouragement for me.

In

The President

The White House

In behalf of all the members of my staff and myself, I send you this expression of our heartfelt appreciation of your kind letter.

With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours,

Tony Biddle, Jr

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

file confidential

PSF
Poland

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
Eu 860C.001/17

December 12, 1939

11-10-39

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch no. 3 of November 10, 1939 concerning General Sosnkowski, which was marked for the President.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosure:

From Paris, November 10, 1939.

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson,
Secretary to the President,
The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU / DIVISION: Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted: 12/8/39

ADDRESSED TO

Brigadier General Watson,
The White House.

Duplicate

PSF Poland

to Poland.

No. 3

Paris, France, November 10, 1939.

Subject: Observations of interest bearing on General Sosnkowski.

[redacted]

For the President and the Secretary.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to supplement my cable No. 11 of October 20, 11 a.m., to the effect that according to Article 24 of the Polish Constitution President Raczkiewicz, on October 16, 1939, nominated General Kazimierz Sosnkowski as his successor, who in the case of the present incumbent's becoming incapacitated would assume office until three months after the signing of peace, and to report the following observations of interest bearing on General Sosnkowski:

As pointed out in previous writings, General Sosnkowski, former Inspector General of the Polish Army, was widely considered a potential candidate for the Presidency, in the

event

event that President Moscicki might become incapacitated, or might withdraw his own candidacy in the elections scheduled to take place in 1940. (At the outbreak of war, however, President Moscicki, pursuant to Article 24 of the Polish Constitution, issued a decree nominating Marshal Smigly-Rydz his successor).

During the several months leading up to the outbreak of hostilities, I came in frequent and close contact with General Sosnkowski. Our exchanges of views during this period served to confirm my former impression that he is a seasoned soldier-statesman of courage, clear perspective, and "good common horse sense".

As regards the General's activities after the outbreak of war, I believe the following account might prove of interest. At the commencement of hostilities the Polish High Command failed to offer General Sosnkowski a field command. Three days after the war started, however, he was offered the post of Vice Premier in charge of coordinating all economic matters of military bearing. He refused this post.

Later he was requested to proceed to Lwow to report on conditions prevailing in the military command in the Lwow corps area. By that time the High Command had become concerned by the Polish southern army's failure to impede the eastward advance of the German forces in southern Poland.

Upon

Upon his arrival at Lwow on September 10, General Sosnkowski discerned a general state of confusion* amongst the Polish troops defending Lwow. General Sosnkowski thereupon came to a quick decision. He hired a private plane and ordered the corps Chief of Staff, Colonel Clothilde Morawski, to accompany him in a flight to a point just east of Przemysl, the scene of battle between the three remaining Polish divisions of the Lwow area and three German army corps.

The pilot succeeded, against great odds, in landing his passengers safely. Indeed they were forced to fly over the German lines. The general thereupon assumed command of the Polish forces and found his three divisions surrounded by the aforementioned three German army corps. Quickly reconsolidating his forces, he, with his Chief of Staff, (both shouldering rifles themselves) fought at the head of his troops to the West by day and to the East by night, finally retiring on Lwow which they valiantly defended until forced to retreat on September 20, with but 2,000 troops - all that were left of his three divisions.

On

---

*For some days previous to General Sosnkowski's arrival in Lwow reports had reached the Polish High Command indicating confusion and ineffective action on the part of the aforementioned Polish forces then under the command of General Fabrice--and until General Sosnkowski's investigation the High Command were at a loss as to the reasons for this condition. The General told me that on the wedding day of General Fabrice's daughter, and just after the wedding ceremonies, the bride and groom proceeded to the Lwow railway station in a taxi, followed by the General and his wife in another taxi. Suddenly an air attack took place over the city, and one plane, diving low, dropped a bomb just between the two taxis, blowing the first taxi and the bride and groom and chauffeur to bits. The mother witnessing this catastrophe, completely lost her mind. The ordeal shattered the nerves of the General, and he subsequently went to pieces. As a result he was lacking in initiative and forceful leadership, and the effectiveness of action of the troops under his command suffered in consequence.

On September 15, the General led an attack against the rear of the enemy, taking about 10,000 prisoners and knocking out or capturing 100 tanks.** In describing his tactics against the tanks the General imparted to me that the enemy was coming at his troops from all sides. In many cases his men had opportunity to fire their anti-tank guns at the on-coming tanks from a distance of just across the road. At this range these guns literally blew the tanks to pieces. In other cases his troops would deliberately let a column pass through the lines, subsequently attacking the petrol lorries and blowing them up, thus eventually immobilizing the tank column, and permitting the Polish troops later to attack the stalled tanks from all sides.

On September 20, the General was forced to retreat, with his Chief of Staff, at the head of a column of two thousand troops - all that was left of the forces formerly defending Lwow. The advance of the Russian columns from the east had made impossible any further attempt by so weakened a force to defend the city. They fell back to a place in the foothills of the Carpathians, where in a deserted hut, he summoned a

conference

**I recall in this connection that during my conversation with Minister Beck in Kuty on the evening of September 16, he was discernibly elated over Sosnkowski's victory. He said it was Sosnkowski who at last had succeeded in adopting effective tactics against German strategy. Moreover, the results of this victory at Lwow had demonstrated Sosnkowski had discovered a new method of attacking the German mechanized columns. I was aware that the news of this victory served importantly to hearten the Government at Kuty and the General Staff at Kolomyja. (It may be recalled that it was the following morning that the Russian troops entered Poland).

conference of his senior officers to decide whether to continue fighting or to evacuate into Hungary. He failed to observe the absence of Colonel Morawski, the Chief of Staff, however, during the conference. At one point in the conference the General stepped outside of the hut, and, to his amazement discovered that all his troops had disappeared. He summoned the one mounted trooper of his outfit, and sent him galloping in all directions in search of the troops. The messenger returned, however, to report no traces of them. The General told me that while this was a shock for him, nevertheless, upon due reflection, he recognized that his men were in a frantic state of mind, having been deprived of sleep and food for many days and nights. Even his Chief of Staff, Colonel Morawski, who had disappeared with the troops, had reached a frantic state of mind. In this connection the General added that during the last days of battle around Lwow, Colonel Morawski (firing his rifle, with deadly accuracy) kept up a continuous wild shouting (like a savage Indian war whoop), which the troops were quick to take up.

The General finally concluded that his men, in this dazed state of mind, had tried to return to Lwow, and were undoubtedly met by the enemy somewhere along the line. He now learns that Colonel Morawski was taken prisoner by the Germans.

With the disappearance of his troops, the General with several of the officers who were left, abandoned their arms and assumed the garb of peasants having decided to evacuate into Hungary. Thus clad they proceeded by foot for 300 kilometers through the Russian lines and into the Carpathian mountain region frequently having to advance waist-deep through snow. They reached the Hungarian border on October 4. They

<u>were</u>

were immediately placed under arrest, later to be released by orders of the Hungarian High Command; whereupon the General was discreetly conducted to Admiral Horthy who received him with notable cordiality. The General, commenting upon the treatment accorded him by the Hungarian military authorities, was enthusiastic in his praise thereof. He added that the Hungarians had been "chic" to the Poles in general and under trying circumstances, namely: German pressure and lack of adequate means to feed and house the interned forces.

As of further interest, General Sosnkowski told me that during his trek, he had had ample opportunity to observe the condition and behavior of the Russian troops. They were poorly clad, especially for snow-bound country. Their uniforms were of cotton and they had no overcoats. They were completely lacking in the spirit which characterized Bolshevik troops during the Polish-Bolshevik campaign, in that they held no characteristic "sing-songs" during the evenings after the day's march. He observed, however, a marked discipline amongst these Russian troops, and noted they refrained from looting. Moreover, in the districts through which he had passed he gained the impression that the Russian military authorities were not inflicting physical harm on the important property owners. He noted, however, that under the local Soviets, the property owners were being forced to assume the tasks of domestic help and day-laborers.

In general, he was of the opinion after what he had witnessed, that the attitude and actions of the Commissars and military authorities bore the earmarks far more of an effort to spread the Red Doctrine in the area occupied, than a move of Imperialistic character.

Respectfully yours,

PSF Poland

[12-28-39

My dear Tony:

I have received your letter of December 4, 1939, with which you enclose a memorandum containing the substance of remarks made to you by Minister Ciechanowski on the subject of Russo-Japanese relations together with your own comments in regard thereto.

The information communicated to you by Minister Ciechanowski in regard to the Polish Government's estimate of possible developments in Russo-Japanese relations is substantially the same as that which Ambassador Grew in a telegram dated November 27 stated had been reported by the Polish, British and French Ambassadors at Tokyo to their Governments. I appreciate the thought which prompted you to communicate this information to me, and I am glad to have your own comments in regard to the subject.

There was recently forwarded by the Department of State to the Embassy at Paris a copy of a memorandum which was given to the British and French Ambassadors by the Under Secretary in the course of conversations in the early part of December when the subject of Russo-Japanese relations was discussed. The Department of State is instructing the Embassy at Paris to make available to you a copy of that memorandum.

Very sincerely yours,

The Honorable
Anthony J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.,
American Ambassador to Poland.

PsF Poland

The Department has been informed by the American Ambassador at Tokyo that it is the view of the British, French and Polish Ambassadors that, unless early steps are taken to improve relations between Japan on the one hand and Great Britain, France and the United States on the other, extremists in Japan may gain control of Japan's foreign policy and effect a general political rapprochement between Japan and the Soviet Union.

There would appear to be two primary questions involved, namely, (1) whether a fundamental and far-reaching rapprochement between Japan and the Soviet Union is likely to occur and (2) whether the effects of such a rapprochement would be so seriously adverse to the interests in the Far East of the United States, Great Britain and France that there would be warrant for making significant concessions to Japan in an attempt to prevent the consummation of such a rapprochement.

After serious study and consideration, this Government is of the opinion that it may be practicable for Japan and the Soviet Union to arrive at agreements relating to questions such as fisheries, the Sakhalin concessions, and the delimiting of frontiers. These matters are, however, relatively unimportant. It is

also

also conceded that a new commercial arrangement between the two countries might be arrived at, although it would seem that such an arrangement would lack any significant economic advantages to either country in view of the economic conditions existing in both countries at the present time. A so-called non-aggression pact and even some kind of a vague political accord might be arrived at. This Government does not disregard these as possibilities. If, however, such an accord were to be reached, and even if it were accompanied by other agreements relating to fisheries, the Sakhalin concessions, the delimiting of frontiers, and commerce, it is the opinion of this Government that such a rapprochment would not bring to Japan or to the Soviet Union material advantages of a substantial and lasting character but would only have a psychological effect of an ephemeral character.

There are certain fundamentals which exist today in the Far Eastern situation:

(1) Japan has a deep-rooted mistrust of the Soviet Union, a mistrust which has presumably been strengthened as a result of recent activities of the Soviet Union in Europe, and that mistrust will not be eliminated by the Soviet Union's participation in a rapprochement;

(2) Japan is maintaining large forces in Manchuria and it is not believed that Japan would feel warranted

in

in materially reducing the number;

(3) Japan is maintaining several hundred thousand troops in China south of the Great Wall; that number cannot be materially reduced so long as China continues to resist; there is no indication that Chinese resistance will end in the near future; and, even though the National Government were to capitulate (of which there is no indication), widespread guerrilla and bandit activities would continue for a considerable period on a scale sufficient to preclude material reduction of Japanese forces;

(4) Japan is pursuing a program of elimination of Western interests in the Far East and will continue to pursue that program, regardless of whether a rapprochement with the Soviet Union takes place, as long as the following by Japan of that program appears to the Japanese feasible; and

(5) Japan has in the past undertaken forward movements in aggression at those times when she felt that the movements could be undertaken without becoming involved in war with a Western power; it does not seem probable that Japan will reverse that policy and take aggressive military action against the possessions in the Far East of Western powers until and unless Japan

becomes

becomes convinced that the Allies will lose the present war; and

(6) It is difficult to conceive how it could be to the basic interests of the Soviet Union to contribute to the success of Japan's imperialistic program in the Far East. For this reason, it is greatly doubted whether, should the Soviet Union, for instance, promise Japan to stop the sending of Soviet supplies to China, the Soviet Union would respect any such promise.

It is the opinion of this Government that these fundamentals will continue to exist whether or not Japan effects a rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

This Government has given consideration to the question of what concessions would have to be made to Japan to dissuade Japan from entering into close political relations with the Soviet Union should it be deemed that such a possibility was imminent. It is this Government's opinion that in such an event Japan would require from one or more of the powers concerned recognition of the right of Japan to a free hand in portions of China, which would necessarily involve (1) the abandonment by those powers to a large degree of their rights and interests in China and (2) cessation of acts on the part of those powers which might be interpreted by Japan as lending support to the National

Government

Government of China. These concessions would, however, if made, result, in our opinion, in serious injury to the prestige of the governments concerned among the peoples of the democratic nations of the Western world and among the peoples of the Asiatic countries, would be of assistance to Japan in her policy of unlimited expansion, and would not eliminate the danger of Japan's committing aggression against the possessions and position in Asia of Western nations.

It is this Government's view that we should not compromise in our principles or surrender any of our material interests in an attempt to dissuade Japan from reaching an accord with the Soviet Union. Japan is employing the idea of such an accord as a threat to wrest from the democracies concessions such as those outlined above. The fact that Japan is giving so much publicity to the question of the accord indicates that she is seriously feeling the effects of her present situation and is seriously perturbed. A yielding to Japan at the present time would render illusory the hope that the course of events would lead to a result which we have striven to bring about, namely, a realization on the part of Japan that she cannot with impunity disregard treaties and international law. Furthermore, if Japan is actually

intending

intending to effect a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, it means that control of the Government is in the hands of extremists. In such circumstance it could reasonably be expected that an accord effected by the Government of the Soviet Union on the one hand and Japanese extremists on the other could endure only for a short period of time.

In view of all the considerations outlined above, this Government continues to believe that the principles of policy to which it adheres in regard to the Far Eastern situation are fundamentally sound and that they should not be deviated from. This Government would of course view with sincere regret the taking of any step by the Japanese Government which would reflect a decision on the part of that Government to follow further courses of action and principles of policy antithetical to those which we are convinced furnish the only sound basis for healthy relations among nations. In determining upon courses of action, this Government is endeavoring to give the fullest possible consideration to all available information and to be fully considerate of the rights and interests of all countries concerned in the Far Eastern situation. We are proceeding and expect to proceed with patience and caution.

<u>Addendum</u>

Addendum

In addition to the six factors mentioned in the memorandum above, as communicated to the British and French Ambassadors, it would seem that a further factor might be regarded as fundamental: namely, that there is under present conditions little that either Japan or Russia could give or offer in the way of commercial or political concessions or assistance which would be of substantial benefit to the other party.

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

PSF
Poland

file personal

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 28, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

In response to your memorandum of December 27, there is attached for your approval a draft of a letter to Ambassador Biddle in acknowledgment of his letter to you of December 4, 1939.

In connection with the memorandum sent to you by Ambassador Biddle on the subject of Russo-Japanese relations, there is enclosed as of possible interest a copy of the memorandum referred to in the draft letter of reply to him.

Enclosures:

1. Draft letter to Ambassador Biddle.
2. Copy of memorandum given to British and French Ambassadors by the Under Secretary of State.
3. From Ambassador Biddle to the President, December 4, with enclosure, returned.

C.H.

PSF
Poland
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 27, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

TO READ AND PREPARE

REPLY FOR MY SIGNATURE.

F. D. R.

Letter to the President from Ambassador Biddle dated December 4, 1939, enclosing memorandum ~~of~~ -Polish Government's views concerning Russo-Japanese relations.

PSF Poland

Angers, December 4, 1939.

My dear Mr. President:

In recent conversation with Minister Ciechanowski (formerly Polish Minister to the United States, and recently appointed Chief of the Cabinet of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Zaleski) he confidentially imparted to me his Government's appraisal of developments in Russo-Japanese relations based upon recent reports from the Polish Ambassador in Tokyo, who had been in close consultation with the British and French Ambassadors in that Capital.

In that my informant's views may serve to shed additional light on developments in the Far East and in that they probably reflect the reactions of the British and the French, as well as the Polish Governments, I

feel

The President

The White House

feel they might prove of possible interest to you. I
1/ therefore take occasion to forward you hereto attached
a memorandum covering the substance of Minister Ciechanowski's
remarks.

With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours,

Tony Biddle, Jr

Enclosure:

Memorandum covering substance
of Minister Ciechanowski's
remarks.

P & F Poland

MEMORANDUM

12-4-39

Substance of Polish Government's views concerning Russo-Japanese relations, as confidentially imparted to me by Foreign Minister Zaleski's Chief of Cabinet, Minister Ciechanowski. (These views are based upon the Polish Government's recent reports from its Ambassador to Tokyo, and after he had consulted his British and French colleagues.

1. Although Russo-Japanese relations have not yet got beyond the preliminary stage as regards such matters as delimination of frontiers, fisheries, status of the concessions on Sakhaline et cetera, a general detente is clearly noticeable.

2. There seems to be a tendency on the part of Soviet Russia to keep her hands free for action in Europe, which induces the Soviets to seek a political and economic rapprochement with Japan, which in time might be completed by some suitable arrangement at the cost of China.

As counterpart, on the pretext of discussions between the Kuomintang and the Communists of China, Russia might be prevailed upon to declare her temporary disinterest regarding Japanese action in non-Communist China on condition that her own influences, already established there should be safeguarded.

3. German propaganda in Japan is working to prepare the ground for such Russian suggestions by enlarging upon the political importance they might gain if on their basis a sort of Triple Alliance could be formed; Germany, Soviet Russia, and Japan, calculated to reinforce Japanese resistance to

American

American demands, and leaving to Japan virtually the whole of non-Communist China and hinting at further tempting possibilities of Japanese expansion in the Dutch East Indies.

4. These tendencies come at a time when the internal atmosphere in Japan is somewhat confused: instability of Government, lengthy discussions about the liquidation of the Chinese campaign, unstable conditions arising out of the critical financial and economic situation, dissatisfaction among the masses on account of the high prices of foodstuffs, rapid growth of Ben-Yu-Kai Party et cetera.

5. Generally speaking, the Japanese army is in principle anti-Russian. However, a growing number of Japanese military men is in favor of a Russo-Japanese settlement as the quickest and simplest, though possibly superficial, way of liquidating the Chinese incident, without renouncing the immediate political and economic advantages gained by Japan.

6. It should be borne in mind that:

(a) The Japanese army tends at all cost to liquidate the Chinese incident before losing its hold on that country together with its prestige;

(b) It might be disposed to engage its future in order to obtain an agreement with Russia which would allow it to speed up the achievement of its aims in China;

(c) If such a policy were to obtain united backing of Japanese military circles, it would certainly ultimately prevail in Government circles.

7. While it is not probable that Japan should lightly

embark

embark upon a general political entente with Russia, and especially upon any dangerous compromise on China, it should however, be taken into consideration that, in the present circumstances any excessive pressure on Japan on the part of the Democracies might seriously influence Japanese policy. In this connection, my informant, reflecting the opinion of his associates then went on to say that one cannot help being apprehensive as the date of the lapsing of the Japanese-American Commercial Treaty approaches without any clear prospect that some future agreement may give to the Japanese Government and business circles sufficient political assets to wrest from Japanese military quarters the indispensable concessions for an understanding with the United States of America.

In these circumstances it is to be feared that if the relations between Japan and the United States were to remain strained, Japan, being unable to find any other issue with which to placate her public opinion, may be forced to turn towards her extremists.

Should such a situation arise, a serious internal crisis would ensue with repercussions in China by which Soviet Russia would be the only one to profit.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS:

Increasing indications that Germany is vigorously fostering a Russo-Japanese accord, at the preliminary expense of China,

and

and the far-reaching implications thereof call, in my opinion for a formula in Japanese-American relations, providing the United States with a check-reign on Japan in terms of economic as well as military-naval considerations.

Moreover, any consideration of a renewal of formal commercial arrangements with Japan calls to my mind for a far-sighted and realistic appraisal of potential consequences. My own observations prompt me to believe that Japan and Russia understand each other clearly: Russia is in the process, (so to speak) of helping herself to Europe; Japan, of helping herself to China.

I doubt seriously whether Russia would have gone beyond her own frontiers in the west, had she not felt confident that Japan had her hands full in China and intended concentrating her attentions there to the exclusion of near-future action vis-a-vis Russia.

Hence, the question as to a renewal of our Treaty of Commerce with Japan gives rise to another question: whether the extension of economic facilities to an economically depressed Japan might not serve more towards strengthening Japan at the ultimate expense of China, than towards truning Japan against Russia.

Angers, December 4, 1939